

# **INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS**

## **United States Department of Agriculture**

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### **HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR WILDLIFE UNDER NEW U. S.-STATE PROGRAM**

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President Roosevelt approved yesterday (Sept. 2) an act providing that the United States shall aid the States in wildlife-restoration projects. The act is to take effect July 1, 1938.

The new law, sponsored by the General Wildlife Federation and other conservation groups, authorizes appropriations equal to revenue derived from Federal taxes on firearms, shells, and cartridges, for a Federal-State wildlife program. Tax receipts in previous years indicate that the funds may total about \$3,000,000 annually.

Wildlife-restoration projects to be financed by the new funds will include the selection, acquisition, and development of areas for wildlife and also research on wildlife-management problems.

#### Benefits of Act Pointed Out

Describing the act as "epoch making in the history of wildlife conservation," officials of the U. S. Biological Survey pointed out the following outstanding features of the new set-up:

Funds from Federal taxes on firearms and ammunition will for the first time be available for improving wildlife conditions.

Hunting-license fees of participating States will be used solely for wildlife purposes.

Money for the improvement of wildlife conditions will be spent in accordance with a carefully planned program.

Federal participation in wildlife-conservation measures is extended to those involving resident and upland species, as well as migrants.

Cooperation between Federal and State wildlife officials will be furthered. The new program also follows a recent movement advanced by Ira N. Gabrielson, Chief of the Biological Survey, and approved by Secretary Wallace, for increased cooperation between Federal and State officials in matters affecting migratory-bird conservation.

Outstanding and ultimate benefit of the new program will be the restoration of land and water areas to the uses of wildlife. Land, "the basis of all things", is essential to any program for the improvement of wildlife conditions.

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: Editors: Detailed and background information follows. :  
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States Receive Proportionate Shares

The amount of the appropriations provided for in the new act that will be available for each State will depend on the size of the State and the number of hunting licenses sold there. After the deduction of not more than 8 percent of the total appropriation, for the administration of the act and for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of Federal refuges, the remaining funds will be divided in half. One half will be apportioned according to State areas, the other half according to hunting licenses sold.

On the basis of a \$3,000,000 total, it is estimated that each State would have available nearly 46 cents for each square mile within its boundaries and, according to the 1935 hunting license reports, more than 23 cents for each license sold.

Not more than \$150,000, however, is to be made available to any one State in a year, and the act also provides for a minimum allotment of \$15,000.

States To Do Their Part

States, according to the act, will cooperate by providing funds equal to one-third of their Federal allotments, and by carrying on the projects in accordance with Federal standards. A State's participation will follow its assent to the provisions of the act and also will depend on its enactment of wildlife-conservation laws, "which shall include a prohibition against the diversion of license fees paid by hunters" for any other purpose than the administration of the State fish and game department.

Funds allotted to any State that does not desire to avail itself of the benefits of the act and funds that are not spent or obligated during the period in which they are available may, according to authorization of the act, be made available for carrying out the provisions of the Federal Migratory Bird Conservation Act. This act provides for the establishment and maintenance of Federal bird refuges.

Highway Act Pointed Road to New Program

The enlarged Federal wildlife program has been laid out in a manner similar to that provided by the Federal Highway Act, and the process of administering the new act is similar to that proved effective in carrying out the Federal-State road program.

The new measure is considered to a great extent an outcome of the North American Wildlife Conference which was called in Washington in February 1936 by President Roosevelt and which resulted in the organization of the General Wildlife Federation.

In his invitation to the conference, the President expressed the hope "that from it will come constructive proposals for concrete action; that through these proposals existing State and Federal governmental agencies and conservation groups can work cooperatively for the common good."

Outstanding among the resulting "proposals for concrete action" has been that advocating a Federal grant-in-aid to the States. A major objective of the General Wildlife Federation, it has also been sponsored by many other conservation organizations. In reporting the bill, the Senate Special Committee on Conservation of Wildlife Resources said:

"The provisions of this bill have been endorsed in principle by: The General Wildlife Federation, the Izaak Walton League of America, the International Association of Fish and Game Commissioners, the Western Association of Fish and Game Commissioners, the American Wildlife Institute, More Game Birds in America, New England Fish and Game Conference, the administrators of the conservation departments of 39 States, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Garden Clubs of America, and other conservation groups, agencies, and individuals throughout the country."

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